



The Book of the Cure of Souls

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The Book of the Cure of Souls

By A. J. ARBERRY

IN a former number of this journal I published a specimen translation of one of the *Rasā'il* of Junayd, as an announcement of my intention to make that famous personage the subject of a monograph.¹ It will be useful at this stage to print the text and translation of what is one of the most interesting of the little treatises preserved in the Istanbul manuscript, both because of its contents, and also for the reason that it is the only work of Junayd for which we have a second authority.² It is unfortunately true that the Istanbul manuscript, as the copyist himself is at pains to admit,³ is derived from a very faulty archetype, and with such an author as Junayd the work of emendation is necessarily attended with countless pitfalls. The Cairo manuscript of the *Kiṭāb Dawā' al-arwāḥ* exhibits roughly ninety variants as compared with the Istanbul manuscript, in the space of rather less than 2½ folios.⁴ In by far the majority of places the Istanbul manuscript appears to be the more correct.

The present opuscle is in reality a meditation on the theme of the vision, or perhaps more properly, the knowledge⁵ of God. The author takes a handful of Qur'anic passages in which God is spoken of as appearing—to Muḥammad, or to Moses—and by applying the principle of *istinbāt*⁶ indicates their significance for the Ṣūfī in his dealings with God. He concludes with a meditation on the familiar theme, "the true Ṣūfī." The whole work is well knit together, and forms a separate and independent treatise.⁷

¹ *JRAS.* July, 1935, pp. 499-507.

² In the text, C = Cairo *majāmi'*, 75; I = Istanbul Ṣehid Ali, 1374.

³ On fols. 57b, 60b.

⁴ Equally striking divergences are exhibited by the *Kiṭāb al-Luma'* in those passages which are common to it and the Istanbul MS.

⁵ For the "vision" of God, literally understood, is a conception abhorrent to orthodoxy.

⁶ Cf. Massignon, *Essai*, p. 28, n. 2.

⁷ A similar meditation on a Qur'anic passage occurs on fols. 58-9 of the Istanbul MS.

الحيرة عند نعت أول قديم نقلت لموافقة¹ وصف محل² لجة³
مما⁴ جرت عليهم⁵ به⁶ المعلوم التي جعلها لهم⁷ به⁸ له⁹.
هيات ذاك¹⁰ له¹¹ ما له¹² به¹³ عنده فأين¹⁴ تذهبون¹⁵ (lxxxi, 26)،
أما سمعت¹⁶ علم طيه¹⁷ لما¹⁸ أبداه¹⁹، وكشفه²⁰ لما²¹ واره²²، واختصاصه²³
لسر²⁴ الوحي لمن اصطفاه²⁵، أوحى²⁶ إلى عبده²⁷ ما أوحى²⁸ ما كذب²⁹
أنفوا³⁰ ما رأى³¹ (liii, 10-11) بالآفق³² الأعلى³³ (liii, 8)، شهد³⁴
له³⁵ أنه عبده³⁶ وحده³⁷، لم³⁸ يجبر³⁹ عليه⁴⁰ استعباد⁴¹ الفيرة⁴² بخفى⁴³ ميل⁴⁴
همة⁴⁵ ولا⁴⁶ إلام⁴⁷ شهوة⁴⁸ ولا⁴⁹ محادثة⁵⁰ نظرية⁵¹ ولا⁵² معارضة⁵³ خطرة⁵⁴
C, 24b ولا سبق⁵⁵ حق⁵⁶ بلفظة⁵⁷ | ولا سبق⁵⁸ أهل الحق⁵⁹ بنطقة⁶⁰ ولا رؤية⁶¹
حظ⁶² بلمحة⁶³، أوحى⁶⁴ إليه⁶⁵ حينئذ⁶⁶ ما أوحى⁶⁷ (liii, 10) هياء⁶⁸
لهم⁶⁹ ما أولاه⁷⁰ بما⁷¹ به⁷² تولاه⁷³ واجتباها⁷⁴ لأمر⁷⁵ فحمل⁷⁶ ما حمل⁷⁷
I, 53a (xxiv, 53) حمل⁷⁸، أوحى⁷⁹ إليه⁸⁰ حينئذ⁸¹ ما أوحى⁸² | بالآفق⁸³
الأعلى⁸⁴، ضاقت⁸⁵ الأماكن⁸⁶ وخنست⁸⁷ المصنوعات⁸⁸ عن أن⁸⁹
يجرى⁹⁰ فيها⁹¹ أو عليها⁹² وحنى⁹³ ما أوتى⁹⁴ إلا⁹⁵ بالآفق⁹⁶ الأعلى⁹⁷
(liii, 8) إذ⁹⁸ ينفشى⁹⁹ السدرة¹⁰⁰ ما ينفشى¹⁰¹ (liii, 16)، نظر¹⁰² من¹⁰³
جلال¹⁰⁴ نظره¹⁰⁵ من غير¹⁰⁶ منظوره¹⁰⁷ الى¹⁰⁸ السدرة¹⁰⁹ حيث¹¹⁰ غشاها¹¹¹ ما

١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧
 ٨ ٩ ١٠ ١١ ١٢ ١٣ ١٤

غشى فثبتت لما غشاها. وأنظر الى الجبل حيث ¹تَجَلَّى له ¹
جَمَلُهُ ²دَكَّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَى صَعِقًا فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ
تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ (vii, 139-140) أن ³أعود لمسألتك الرؤية بعد
هذا المقام الى إكباره ⁴ما فرط من سؤاله وإلى ⁵أن العلم
لو صادف حقيقة ⁶في ⁷وقت المسألة لم يكن القول سائغا
يليق به، وفي هذا المكان علم ليس حقه الرسم ولا يليق ⁸
الكتب. ⁹وأنظر الى إخباره عن حبيبه ¹⁰وَلَقَدْ رَأَاهُ نَزْلَةً
أُخْرَى عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُتَهَيَّ (liii, 13) والعند ¹¹ها هنا لا يقتضى
مكانا إنما يقتضى وقت كشف علم الوقت، فأنظر الى
فضل الوقتين ومختلف المكانين وفرق ما بين المنزلتين
في العلو والدنو، وكذلك فضلت عقول ¹²المؤمنين من
العارفين فنهما ¹³ما يطيق خطاب المناجاة مع علم قرب من
ناجاه وأدناه فلا يستره ¹⁴في الدنو علم الدنو ولا في العلو
علم العلو، ومنها ما لا يطيق ذلك فيجمل الأسباب هي
المؤدية اليه الفهم ¹⁵وبها يستدرك فهم الخطاب فيكون منه
الجواب، ولا تقف عند قوله وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ

¹⁻¹ I - ² I لجلاله ³ C الى ⁴ C أكثره ⁵ C -
⁶ C + صلى الله ⁷ C - ⁸ C + به ⁹ C الكتم ¹⁰ I marg. حقيقته ¹¹ C
¹² C - ¹³ C منها ¹⁴ C ستره ¹⁵ C المقيد ¹⁶ C عليه وسلم

اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَخِيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءَ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلُ رُسُلًا
 فَيُوحِي بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ (xlii, 50). وهذه أما كن يضيق
 بسط العلم فيها إِلَّا عند المفاوضة لأهل المجاورة وفي¹
 الاشتغال بعلم مسالك الطرق المؤدية إلى علوم أهل^{C, 25a}
 الخالصة الذين خلوا من خلواتهم، وبرئوا² من إراداتهم،،
 وحيل بينهم وبين ما يشتتهون وعصفت بهم رياح^{I, 53b}
 الفطنة، فأوردتهم على بحار الحكمة،، فاستنبطوا³ صفو ماء
 الحياة لا يحذرون غائلة⁴، ولا يتوقعون⁵ نازلة، ولا
 يشرّهون⁶ إلى طلب بلوغ غاية، بل الغايات لهم بدايات،
 هم الذين ظهروا في باطن الخلق وبطنوا في ظاهريهم،⁷
 أمناء على وحيه حافظون لسره نافذون لأمره قائلون
 بحقه⁸ عاملون بطاعته، يسارعون⁹ في الخيرات وهم لها
 سابقون، جرت معاملتهم في مبادئ أمورهم بحسن الأدب
 فيما ألزمهم القيام به من حقوقه¹⁰ لم تبق¹¹ عندهم نصيحة إِلَّا
 بذلوها، ولا قرينة إِلَّا وصلوها،، سمحت نفوسهم ببذل¹²

C يتوقعون⁵ - C⁴ فاستنبطوا³ C وتبرأوا² C وفن¹

C حقوقهم¹⁰ C ومسارعون⁹ C لحقه⁸ C ظواهرهم⁷ C يسرعون⁶ C وطبوا¹² C سنة¹¹

المهيج عند أول حق من حقوقه في طلب الوسيلة اليه
فبادرت¹ غير مُبْقِيَةٍ ولا مُسْتَبْقِيَةٍ بل نظرت الى أن الذي
عليها في حين بذلها أكثر مما لها بما² بذلت، لوائح
الحق اليها مشيرة، وعلوم الحق لديها غزيرة، لا توقّفهم
لائمة عند نازلة، ولا تثبّطهم رهبة عند فادحة، ولا³
تبعثهم رغبة عند أخذ أهبة⁴، حافظون لما⁵ استحفظوا
من كتاب الله⁶ وكانوا عليه شهداء أن عرج بهم⁷ اللجأ
عند القيام⁸ بواجب الى طلب الاستعانة لإتمام ما⁹
قد رأوه¹⁰، لم¹¹ تُبْخِشْهُمْ¹² المناصحة الإصغاء الى محادثته¹³
ما بقيت¹⁴ منهم بقية حياة موجوده إشفاقاً من دخول
الوهم مع وجود العلم بواجب الحقوق الى حقوقها، نزل¹⁵
التوقّف عن استقبال المبادرة في حين الأمر بالسعى ليكون
الفاعل عقيماً للأمر بلا فصل محدود يُعْلَمُ في غير صفة
الأمر به. وهذه | صفات أهل الموالات¹⁶ من أهل المصافاة
الدائم نظرهم الى ما يجري بهم القول مما ألزم حق

C, 25b

C بما⁵ C احدى هبة⁴⁻⁴ I لا³ C له²⁻² C وبادرت¹
I قلده¹⁰⁻¹⁰ C —⁹ C —⁸⁻⁸ C لهم⁷ C + عز وجل⁶
C ترك¹⁵ C يثبت¹⁴ CI marg. محادثتهم¹³ C تبخشهم¹² C ولم¹¹
I الموالات¹⁶

العبودية في الرهبانية التي¹ وقع الذم لمن التزمها ولم يقيم
 بواجب حقها بترك رعايتها، فسبقت نفوس المعاملين² بما لهم
 بعلمهم³ | فاحتجوا برؤية ما لهم بعلمهم عما لهم بعلم علمهم³ عما³ I, 54a
 لهم بالإناعم⁴ عليهم بكشف علم علمهم⁵، فتكاثفت الحجب
 بالحجب⁶ عن كشف علوم الحجب⁶ فأقاموا تحت التغطية،
 وبعد الخروج من هذه الأماكن تبدو علوم كشف التغطية
 لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ
 فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ (I, 21)، وقف على حدود الأشياء
 بكشف⁷ بارئها⁸ لها⁹ وما ألبسها من نور الصنعة وزهرة
 الإرادة بنفاذ¹⁰ القدرة على جمعها وتفريقها ومجاريها¹¹ وتحقيقها¹¹
 وَلَا يُوَدُّهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي
 الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ¹² (ii, 256).

I¹ علمهم C فالإنعام⁴ I¹ بعلمهم C المعاملين² I الذي¹
 I ومجاريها¹¹ I بنفاذ¹⁰ C بها⁹ C الأناث⁸ C تكشف⁷ C — C —⁶
 + C تمت بعون الله تعالى وصلى الله على محمد النبي المكرم المطهر¹¹
 الفضل المرحوم وعلى اله وصحبه وعترته الاطهرين الطيبين الاخيار
 I + النجبا الابرار والحمد لله رب العالمين وهو حسبنا ونعم الوكيل

TRANSLATION

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Praise belongs to God, Who has made clear with manifest demonstration, to the people of gnosis and revelation, what special favours He bestowed upon them, in pre-eternal eternity, before "before" came into being, when there was neither "when" nor "where" nor "how" nor "there", and when there was neither "not-when" nor "not-where" nor "not-how" nor "not-there",¹ by making them worthy of His unification, and the separation of His isolation, who had passed away from the pretence of attaining His limitation.² For they were chosen for Himself, and made under His eye, and on them He cast a love from Him and of Him: "and I chose thee for Myself"³ and "that thou mayst be made under My eye",⁴ "and I cast on thee a love from Myself".⁵

Now one of the qualities of those whom God has fashioned for Himself, making them under His eye, and casting on them His love from Himself and of Himself, is this: that their knowledge stays not fixed⁶ in one place, nor does their intellect accord with a fixation of a certain intelligence, nor is their resolve directed towards the accomplishment of a single purpose. These are they who are transported by gnosis whither knowledge never transported them—to an infinite aim. Intellects would shrink, minds perish, gnosis be constricted, times pass away, bewilderment would wander in bewilderment, at the description of the first step taken

¹ Such descriptions of the indescribable nature of God are common-places in Šūfī literature; see the well-known definition of Ḥallāj quoted (anonymously) in *Kalābādhi*, *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf*, p. 13.

² Sc. of setting bounds to the illimitable nature of God.

³ Q. xx, 43. This and the following quotations in their context refer to Moses; here they are given a universal application.

⁴ Q. xx, 40.

⁵ Q. xx, 39.

⁶ Literally, "they have no foot (cf. Q. x, 2) of a knowledge . . ." The meaning of this and the following phrase is, that the mystics pass on continuously from revelation to revelation, so that their minds are in a state of flux.

to accord with the quality of a locus for a love,¹ because of the various degrees of knowledge, appointed by God for them through Himself and of Himself, which continued passing over them. For ah ! that, which is His, is His through Him being with Him² : “ whither then will ye depart ? ”³ Hast thou not heard of the knowledge of His folding up what He Himself displayed, and His revealing what He Himself concealed ?⁴ Of how He chose whom He chose to receive the secret of His revelation ? “ He revealed unto His servant what He revealed ; the heart belied not what he saw ”⁵ “ at the highest horizon ”.⁶ He testified to him that he was His servant alone ; therefore God did not use him jealously, because of any secret yearning for a desire, or a covert gratification of a lust, or a commerce with a glance, or traffick with a thought⁷ : he did not stake a claim by utterance,⁸ nor outstrip the just claimants by a spoken word, neither did he for a single instant consider any personal advantage. “ He revealed unto him ” then “ what He revealed ”—He made his intellect ready for that which He bestowed on him when He took him to Himself, and chose him for a certain matter, laying on him “ what burden he has to bear ”,⁹ and he bore it. “ He revealed unto him ” then “ what He revealed—at the highest horizon ” : for space was too narrow, and created things shrank, before suffering

¹ Sc. the heart of man, which is the locus of God's love.

² The knowledge that sweeps over the mystic is not of himself, but of God, and never leaves Him.

³ Q. lxxxi, 26 : man cannot escape from God.

⁴ “ Folding up what He displayed ” is man's non-existence from the time of the creative *kun* until his birth in time ; “ revealing what He concealed ” is the knowledge of God, which was taken from man when he was disobedient.

⁵ Q. liii, 10-11. This passage is usually taken by the commentators to refer to a vision of Gabriel ; it seems that Junayd interprets it as a vision of God Himself.

⁶ Q. liii, 8.

⁷ Sc. of other than God.

⁸ By speaking before God spoke to him, as if eager to claim Him.

⁹ Q. xxiv, 53 ; the burden of Prophethood.

the revelation that was made to him to pass through them or over them, save "at the highest horizon",¹ "when there covered the lote-tree what did cover it"²—a glance from the majesty of His glance, which has no object of glance, falling upon the lote-tree, when there covered it what did cover it, and it withstood that which did cover it.³

Consider also the mountain, when "He revealed Himself" to it; "He made it dust, and Moses fell swooning, and when he recovered, he said, Glory be to Thee! I have turned unto Thee"⁴—that is, I return to ask of Thee the vision: after experiencing this station,⁵ in spite of knowing how enormous his petition was, and despite the fact that, had knowledge met with reality in the time of asking, words would not have been permissible or appropriate.⁶ Now in this station there is a knowledge which may not be inscribed, and which it is not appropriate to put in writing.⁷

Consider also how God relates concerning His Beloved: ⁸ "and he saw him yet another time, at the lote-tree of the utmost boundary."⁹ The word "at" here does not imply place: it only implies the moment of revealing the knowledge of the "moment".¹⁰ Consider then the excellence of the two moments, and the variety of the two places, and how the two stations differed, the one being on high, and the other below.¹¹ So excel the intellects of the gnostics who

¹ For there only God could make revelation in space, as explained later.

² Q. liii, 16.

³ The heavenly tree was able to withstand God's glance, which otherwise destroys all upon which it falls.

⁴ Q. vii, 139-140. This is the story of Moses, who asked God to let him see Him: the mountain turned to dust before the vision of God (not being preserved, as was the lote-tree).

⁵ Speaking of it as a mystical experience.

⁶ For the experience of God is ineffable.

⁷ So the Sūfis ever draw back from writing of their highest experiences.

⁸ Sc. Muḥammad.

⁹ Q. liii, 13: this is usually taken to refer to the *mi'rāj*.

¹⁰ In the mystical sense of the word.

¹¹ The two "revelations" described in Q. liii: the first "two bows' length off or nearer still", an earthly visitation, the second "at the lote-tree", in highest heaven.

believe. Some of them can utter intimate converse, being aware how near He is Who converses with them and draws them unto Him: whether they be on high or below, the knowledge of the fact does not veil them.¹ Others are not able to do this: with them God makes secondary causes² a means to understanding, so that through these they are able to understand when God addresses them, and answer Him. Do not pause at God's saying, "and no man is permitted that God may speak with him, save it be by revelation, or from behind a veil, or that He sendeth a messenger, to reveal by His leave what He wills."³ These are matters⁴ too vast for narrow knowledge to comprehend, except a man consult with those who enjoy neighbourhood,⁵ or occupy himself with the knowledge of the winding ways that lead to the sciences of the elect,⁶ who are solitary even from their solitudes, and are free of all their desires. For a barrier has been set between them and the objects of their lusts: swept along by the winds of understanding, they were brought down to the seas of wisdom, whence they drew the pure water of life. They fear no mischief thereof, no visitation they expect, neither are they avid to seek the attainment of any end: nay rather, ends are for them beginnings.⁷ What in other men is hidden, in that they are manifest, and they are hidden in that in which other men are manifest.⁸ They are the trustees of God's revelation, the preservers of His secret, performing His command, speaking of His truth, acting in obedience to Him. They vie with one another in good works, hastening beforehand to perform them: in the

¹ Permitting converse with God, a feature of much Šūfī experience, as the *Mawāqif* of Niffari exemplify.

² Sc. phenomena, the "natural" mysticism.

³ Q. xlii, 50.

⁴ Literally, "places."

⁵ Sc. with God.

⁶ Sc. the Šūfis.

⁷ Since they rest not in any goal, but take each achievement as a starting-point for higher things.

⁸ Their souls are as other men's bodies, for by and for them they live.

very beginning of their course they preserved excellent manners in their dealings,¹ whatever might be the due which they were required to pay to God. No wise counsel is there, which they have not put into practice, no means to winning God's favour, which they have not employed. Their souls liberally gave all their strength in paying His first due, seeking to come to Him, zealous, leaving nothing, and reserving nothing: rather, they considered that what they owed, at the time of their payment, was greater far than all that their payment had of merit. God's manifest signs² to them point, and the sciences³ of God in them abound. No reproach gives them pause at any visitation, no fear hinders them at any calamity, no covetousness incites them in making any preparation.⁴ They preserve God's Book which was entrusted to them, and to it bear witness, for when they perform any duty, they do not turn from seeking refuge in turning to ask God's help, to complete what they set out to do. Their counselling others does not diminish their listening to God addressing them,⁵ so long as there remains in them any vestige of the life that is in Him: for they fear lest, knowing what they are required to do for God, they may suffer some vain conceit to enter into the performance of their dues.⁶ Therefore they do not hesitate to run forth eagerly whenever the command comes, that act may follow command, without sharp, appreciable division, such as would not be of the nature of the command.

These are the qualities of the elect of God, His beloved friends, whose eye is ever fixed on the saying, which has

¹ They observed *adab* in their behaviour towards God.

² Sc. created things, the guides to natural religion.

³ The intellectual guides to God's religion.

⁴ Whatever they suffer or undertake, they do it for God alone, with no other motive.

⁵ The variant reading would mean "others addressing them", which less appropriate to the context.

⁶ They continue to listen to God, and are not puffed up by their position as counsellors of others, into imagining that what they do is by their own power.

application to them, impressing the duty of servanthood in true discipline—a discipline which is only condemned¹ in the case of those who undertake it, without performing their obligations under it, failing to practise it.

The souls of practitioners take hastily the knowledge² they have, and are veiled by the thought of that knowledge so that they do not know what the knowledge of that knowledge means to them or what God's favour means in revealing to them the knowledge of what that knowledge is.³ So veil thickens upon veil, hiding the revelation of the sciences of the veils,⁴ and they remain beneath their covering. Then, when they have emerged from these conditions,⁵ there appear to them the sciences of the unveiling of the covering. "Thou wast in heedlessness of this, and we uncovered thy covering, and thy sight to-day is keen"⁶—such a man understands the limits⁷ of things, for the Creator uncovers them, and reveals the light of creation in which He clothed them, and the beauty of will, which was manifested in His pervading power, concentrating them and separating them, giving them movement⁸ and reality. "It tires Him not to keep them both,⁹ for He is High, Mighty. No constraint is there in the faith: guidance has become clear from error."¹⁰

¹ As in the well-known Tradition, "no monkery (*rahbānīyah*) in Islam" which Junayd thus explains.

² Religious theory—the law, and its ramifications in religious practice.

³ That is, knowing what God's purpose was in prescribing certain duties to man. This passage is obscure, and perhaps the reading of I¹ is correct.

⁴ This is the true purpose of Ṣūfī discipline.

⁵ Literally, "places."

⁶ Q. i, 21.

⁷ A play on words—*ḥadīd* and *ḥudūd*.

⁸ Literally, "their courses."

⁹ In the context, heaven and earth.

¹⁰ Q. ii, 256. The foregoing translation is of necessity somewhat tentative, and I should welcome any suggestions for emendation or clarification.